

THE

ל'פ"ז

SHEKEL



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Sir Moses Montefiore

A Painting by H. Weigall 1881

OUR ORGANIZATION

AMERICAN ISRAEL NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

Post Office Box 940277

Far Rockaway, New York 11694-0277

Tel. 718-634-9266 Fax 718-318-1455



Moe Weinschel, *President*

Edward Janis, *Vice-President*

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The American Israel Numismatic Association is a cultural and educational organization dedicated to the study and collection of Israel's coinage, past and present, and all aspects of Judaic numismatics. It is a democratically organized, membership oriented group, chartered as a non-profit association under the laws of The State of New York. The primary purpose is the development of programs, publications, meetings and other activities which will bring news, history, social and related background to the study and collection of Judaic numismatics, and the advancement of the hobby.

The Association sponsors major cultural/social/numismatic events such as national and regional conventions, study tours to Israel, publication of books, and other activities which will be of benefit to the members. Local chapters exist in many areas. Write for further information.

The Association publishes the SHEKEL six times a year. It is a journal and news magazine prepared for the enlightenment and education of the membership and neither solicits nor accepts advertising. All articles published are the views and opinions of the authors and may or may not reflect the views and opinions of A.I.N.A.

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A.I.N.A., 12555 Biscayne Blvd. #733 North Miami, Fla. 33181

Editor

EDWARD SCHUMAN

13245 Coronado Drive

No. Miami, Fla. 33181

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The President's Message *by Moe Weinschel*



Dear Members:

We are all excited about the 1995 AINA Israel Tour. This tour will include a side trip to Petra/Jordan and Eliat. The dates are March 9th through 26th. We will travel via Tower Air, departing on Thursday evening. First stop is Moriah Plaza/Tiberias: touring to the North, Galilee, Golan, Safad, Nazareth, Haifa, Meggido. Then to the Moriah Plaza/Jerusalem: Old & New City, Yad Vashem, Museums, Massada, Dead

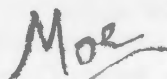
Sea, to the Grand View Hotel in Petra, Jordan. Aquaba to the Moriah Plaza/Eilat: Judean Desert, Beer Sheba, Digs. Then to Moriah Plaza /Tel-Aviv: Caesarera amphitheater, Rehovot, Jaffa, Crusader Castles, Diaspora Museum, Museum of Numismatics, Maritime Museum, Carmel Market for Halvah and much more. There will be eleven days of escorted sightseeing by private motor coach with Gov't. licensed Guides. All expenses (except departure taxes) are included in the \$2795-(Double occupancy) fee. Also included is the Famous Israeli Breakfast and full Dinner daily. We will also have a reception by Israel Government Coins and Medals.

A reservation flyer is enclosed with this issue of the SHEKEL. TIME IS SHORT. If you wish the best flight accommodations, you must send your deposit in as soon as possible. Reservations are limited to one bus, 50 persons.

Because this issue is being mailed early in order to bring the tour information to you as fast as possible, the continuing series of Israel Money and Medals updates by Dr. Gary P. Laroff has been omitted as it could not be completed on time. The series will resume in the next issues.

Also, if you have not already done so, won't you please mail your 1995 A.I.N.A. dues to our treasurer. Thanks.

Shalom



A.I.N.A. is a non-profit 501C Tax Exempt organization. Donations are fully tax deductible. Please remember a donation to A.I.N.A., when you pay your dues, and/or if you set up a legacy, thus giving A.I.N.A. the opportunity to be the vibrant voice of Israel Numismatics and continue the great accomplishments of the past.

The Greatest Shtadlonim
by Maurice Samuel
from "HARVEST IN THE DESERT" published 1944

Ever since their dispersion, the Jews had entrusted the problems of their relations with Gentiles to Shtadlonim, to individuals of wealth, importance, learning or influence. Entrusted is perhaps not the right word. Shtadlonim of this type were not elected by anybody, nor were they accountable to a public body. They simply took it upon themselves, by virtue of their connections, to represent the Jews to the Gentiles. They were self-appointed Ministers of Foreign Affairs. They meant well. At least, they meant as well as they could, for human beings can mean well only within the limits of their outlook. Their record is as good as that of any similar body of autocrats among any other people. They negotiated for the mitigation of severe decrees against the Jews, and for the privilege of immigration. They defended the reputation of the Jews against accusations of anti-social practices. They were apologists, memorialists, spokesmen and representative figures, and they have an honorable place in Jewish history. But the middle of the nineteenth century saw the beginning of their decline.

The greatest of these, perhaps the greatest and best in Jewish history, was Sir Moses Montefiore. The mention of his name tempts us to a long digression. We shall resist; but he cannot be by-passed in this account. To begin with, he was a fascinating figure; not at all by virtue of extraordinary and dazzling qualities, like Disraeli, for example, but by virtue of a life which was very long, very active and unbelievably edifying. He was like a copy-book of moral maxims translated into reality. He has to be considered a bit at a time, lest the uniformity of his virtues and his oppressive respectability provoke us to unworthy protest. He belongs to this story because he illustrates excellently how the best intentions of the Shtadlonim – and their intentions were frequently of the best – were unavailing as long as the Jewish masses were not prepared for self-emancipation.

Moses Montefiore became one of the legendary figures among the Jews of all countries. His picture hung in poor Jewish homes in Russia, in Roumania, in Galicia, in forlorn villages of the Carpathians. He was credited, during his lifetime, with a degree of power and influence which no Jew of any age has ever possessed. And no wonder. In the course of his long life he had interviewed, on behalf of the Jews, two Russian Czars, two Turkish Sultans, a King of France, a King of Prussia, a Shah of Persia, a Khedive of Egypt, an Emperor of Morocco, a prospective Emperor of France – not to mention the Queen of his own country and a host of princes, prelates, diplomats, statesmen and aristocrats at large.

He had a genuine and unquenchable love for Palestine. He made seven pilgrimages to the country, the first in 1827, when he was forty-three, the last in 1875, when he was ninety-one.

One reads almost with stupefaction a passage in his diaries, entered as the boat was taking him from Alexandria to Jaffa the last trip. This nonagenarian, already twenty years beyond the normal allotment of three-score and ten (but with another decade before him!) wrote, like a vigorous and sentimental youngster: *"As we were steaming out of the harbor, my spirits became buoyant in the extreme."* He was a hundred years old when the Kattowitz Conference for Palestine, held in 1884 to promote a unified and coordinating center for the early Zionist activities, sent him its respectful congratulations. He was ninety-seven when the first modern colonies were founded, and he sent his contribution to Rishon le-Zion and Zichron Ya'akov. He died at the age of a hundred and one. The extra year was probably a gesture of defiance, the only touch of the flamboyant we can discover in his life.

In spite of his love of Palestine, his desire for its welfare and that of the Jewish people, his considerable influence, his prestige and his sixty years of – admittedly – intermittent activity for the country, he left behind him, as far as its annals of achievement are concerned, nothing besides his name. Attempts have been made to represent him as the first modern Zionist, the first to come out openly for the Return. The case has some evidence in its favor, but it cannot be sustained. It is certain that he wanted the poverty-stricken Jews of Palestine to combine, with their studies and pieties, the pursuit of handicrafts and agriculture. He negotiated with Mehemet Ali, the able, ferocious and picturesque Khedive of Egypt, for the purchase of lands in Palestine, and projected a colonizing company with a capital of \$5,000,000. On his second visit to Palestine, in 1838, he wrote:

"I am sure that if the plan I have in contemplation should succeed, it will be the means of introducing happiness and plenty into the Holy Land. In the first instance I shall apply to Mehemet Ali for a grant of land for fifty years; some one or two hundred villages; giving him an increased rent of from ten to twenty per cent . . . The grant obtained, I shall, please Heaven, on my return to England, form a company for the cultivation of the land and the encouragement of our brethren in Europe to return to Palestine. Many Jews now emigrate to New South Wales, Canada, etc., but in the Holy Land they would find a greater certainty of success; here they would find wells already dug, olives and vines already planted, and a land so rich as to require little manure. By degrees I hope to induce the return of thousands of our brethren to the land of Israel. I am sure they would be happy in the observance of our holy religion, in a manner which is impossible in Europe."

He had little understanding of the land, and less of the heartache and labor connected with the encouragement of a national awakening. He had illusions about the condition of Palestine. He wrote:

"There are groves of olive trees, I should think, more than five hundred years old, vineyards, much pasture, plenty of wells and an abundance of water; also figtrees, walnuts, almonds, mulberries, etc., and rich fields of wheat, barley and lentils; in fact, it is a land that would produce almost everything in abundance, with very little skill and labor."

But he was quite wrong. He had seen a few patches of fertile soil. If the land was to be made to sustain millions, it would need the application of infinite skill and labor. He cannot, therefore, have considered what a task it would be to transform the ghetto dwellers of Europe into agricultural workers, on a soil that had been reduced to barrenness by centuries of neglect. He cannot have understood that nothing could bring about this transformation but a great democratic upheaval from within the people.

He said, toward the end of his life:

"I do not expect that all Israelites will quit their abodes in those territories in which they fed happy, even as there are Englishmen in Hungary, Germany, America and Japan; but Palestine must belong to the Jews, and Jerusalem is destined to become the seat of a Jewish commonwealth."

This is the clearest Zionist note in his record. It is remarkable enough, the more so as it comes from a typical Shtadlan. But Zionism is not day-dreaming; it is a mass movement, and from mass movements Montefiore was remote.

It was, nevertheless, something that might be called proto-Zionism. Montefiore was not caught up passionately in the idea of the Return. He did not press it on the world, on the potentates and statesmen he interviewed. With them he discussed local Jewish grievances. No doubt he would have considered it impolitic to raise the question of a Jewish Homeland in Palestine; and this, precisely, is what made him a Shtadlan.

Though he entertained the idea of the Return, he conceived it as something rather genteel, a blessing conferred by the benevolent rich on the grateful poor, a phenomenon which released no passions, but unfolded respectably while the world stood by and nodded approval. But he was not without some influence on the remoter course of events. It was probably through him that Adolphe Cremieux, the French Jewish statesman, turned his attention to the oriental Jews. They worked together on the Damascus Affair in 1840, and when in 1860 Cremieux founded the Alliance Israelite Universelle, an organization - more exactly a committee of upper class Jews - to promote the welfare and defend the rights of Jews everywhere, but particularly in the East, he remembered Palestine. Or he might have remembered it in any case. Again, an American Jew by the name of Judah Touro remembered it, and left Montefiore the sum of \$50,000 to administer for the poor of Jerusalem. An Englishman by the name of Laurence Oliphant, one of those eccentric characters who from time

to time inject a touch of fantasy into the rather depressing practicality of their nation, conferred with Montefiore, and gathered from him increased devotion to the idea of the Redemption. Possibly Montefiore had more to do with the imponderables of later Zionism than the record establishes.

Montefiore's hundredth birthday was celebrated throughout the Jewish world. Even as far away as Dutch-ruled Curacao, the governor attended a special service in the synagogue, the town was illuminated with fireworks, and a full-day holiday was proclaimed on which all government bureaus were closed and all ships in the harbor flew their national flags. Two children born on that day on the island were named after him.

Montefiore died in his 101st year and was buried alongside his wife in the mausoleum he had built on his estate.

There are numerous medals honoring Sir. Moses Montefiore issued by enthusiastic groups. One of the largest and possibly finest is a medal issued by the great Jewish medallist Charles Weiner in 1864. The obverse portrays the bust profiles of Sir Moses Hayim and Lady Judith Montefiore. The reverse shows around the rim a wreath intertwined with Hebraic inscriptions on ribbons: from left clockwise; Morocco 5624, Rome 5618, Jerusalem Damascus 5600, Russia 5606. In the center, an inscription in Hebrew "And Moses grew up and went out to his brethren (Israelites)/ and he saw them in their sufferings/and the intellectuals/will shine like the brightness of the heavens/and the many righteous people/will be as the stars forever and ever".



10

עשר
לירות
ישראליות

10

משה מנחם
יושב ראש
המועצה המייעצת

נגיד הבנק



1

שקל
אחד

1

משה מנחם
יושב ראש
המועצה המייעצת

נגיד הבנק



The Bank of Israel has honored the memory of Sir. Moses Montefiore on Israeli currency. A full faced portrait of Montefiore is shown on the Ten Pound issue of 1975 and One Sheqel issue of 1980. His portrait is placed against the background of Mishkenot Shaananim, the first Jewish settlement outside the walls of Jerusalem, which he founded, using a legacy left to him by Judah Touro. The windmill he constructed so the residents of the area would have the means to grind their wheat or corn stands at the right. The windmill still stands today but has been converted to a museum for Montefiore.

Bobruisk Emergency Scrip **by Edward Schuman**

Bobruisk is a city in the district of Minsk, Russia, situated on the right bank of the River Berezina. It is mentioned in 1511 on official documents concerning Jews. The inhabitants of Bobruisk, along with those of other towns, petitioned King Sigismund to allow them to pay their taxes diurectly to the crown. A Jew, Ilya Lipshitz, is recorded on a list of duties paid at the Brest-Litovsk courthouse in 1583.

Bobruisk was of little importance until the early part of the nineteenth century. Then, under Czar Alexander I, it began to increase rapidly in population. In 1898 it had 19,125 Jewish inhabitants of a total population of 30,177. It was a prosperous city with commerce, consisting chiefly of dry-goods, grain, and wood, mainly in Jewish hands.

The community was divided into Hasidim and Mitnagdim, who lived harmoniously together. Bobruisk possessed many charitable and social institutions, among which the most noteworthy was a refuge for old men, founded by the philanthropist, Hayyim Boaz Rabbinowicz.

In the district of Bobruisk there were at least 500 persons who depended upon farming for their existance. Most of the dairies were in the hands of Jews (110 families), who had lost all other resources for a livelihood since the introduction of the government monopoly of the liquor trade. In the vicinity of Bobruisk were plantations, upon which about 100 Jewish girls worked in the summer. In the town there were small factories which employed 120 Jews. The manufacture of leather goods was considerable, many of the workshops producing uppers for shoes for export to neighboring towns and villages. There were 3,139 Jewish artisans, 285 tailoring establishments (employing 367 hands), and 276 shoe and boot making establishments (employing 165 hands). There were 444 Jewish laborers, employed chiefly in carting.

A Jewish hospital, a cheap kitchen, an institution for the aged, a society for the aid of the sick poor at their homes and an "Imilat-Khasodim", which lent money without interest. Besides the regular schools, attended by comparatively few Jewish children, there were schools for Jews exclusively: two private schools for girls (300 pupils), a female technical school (160 girls), a primary public school (160 boys), and the Jewish People's Technical School (60 boys). This information was found in Volume III of the original Jewish Encyclopedia, published in 1903.

There were numerous yeshivot in Bobruisk. Distinguished rabbis who officiated there included Shemariah Noah Schneerson of the Lubavitch. His son-in law, took the name Schneerson as his own when he became the world leader of the Lubavitcher movement. His illness and death a few months ago brought sorrow and anquish to his followers, who believed him to be the Messiah.

Toward the end of the 19th century, Bobruisk became a center of cultural and political activity for Belorussian Jewry in which both the Zionist and radical wings were prominent. The publishing house of Jacob Cohen Ginsburg became celebrated throughout Russia. The "model" heder, established in 1900, provided comprehensive Hebrew instruction and did much to raise the standard of Hebrew education. A popular Jewish library was also opened. Bobruisk became one of the main bases of the Zionist movement.

During and after World War I, the Jewish population suffered from the frequent changes of government during the civil war and the Soviet-Polish war (1918-21). It was during this period of hard times that Jewish organizations in many towns and villages throughout Russia issued various forms of "scrip" currency, a short gap measure to alleviate the currency shortages. The illustrated note, with a value of One Ruble, was issued by the Zionist Organization in Bobruisk. While it is undated, it is believed to have been issued in 1919. This unique note photograph was supplied by AINA member Steve Volis.



Jewish activities ceased after the Communist takeover. J. Ginsburg and other publishers continued to print prayer books and religious publications in Bobruisk until 1928 when the last work of Jewish religious literature was published in the Soviet Union. A network of Communist schools giving instruction in Yiddish was established in Bobruisk after the 1917 Revolution and functioned until 1939. The town was occupied by the Nazis in World War II, and on Nov. 7, 1941, 20,000 Jews were sent from there to their deaths.

The Jewish population increased after the war, and was estimated at 30,000 in 1970. There was no synagogue, the last one having been closed in 1959 but there was a separate Jewish cemetery and Kasher poultry was available.

Y a d S a r a from the Jerusalem Post

Seventeen years ago, in an act that has become almost legendary, Rabbi Uri Lupoliansky lent a vaporizer to a neighbor whose child had trouble breathing. In those days, such electric gadgets were hard to come by and expensive. After neighbors heard of the loan, they too asked to borrow the device. Lupoliansky quickly realized that there was a great need for free loans of medical equipment.

When his father Ya'acov, offered him a considerable sum of money for charity in memory of his mother who died in the Holocaust, Yad Sara was born. Uri decided to set up a free loan fund of simple medical devices, from vaporizers and wheelchairs to oxygen tanks and walkers. Government ministries were pleased by the reduced financial burden on their resources, but have constantly declined to give regular contributions

In a contrary country like Israel, where everybody seems to enjoy saying something bad about somebody, nobody seems to have anything bad to say about Yad Sara. Run by 4,000 volunteers and only 35 paid staffers through 70 branches from Kiryat Shmona to Eilat, it provides free services to 200,000 families around the country each year, saving the public health system NIS 250 million by allowing the elderly, sick and disabled to function at home instead of being hospitalized.

"I was surprised and very moved," says Uri Lupoliansky, a former teacher, father of 12 and today a deputy mayor (representing Degel Hatora) of Jerusalem when he was awarded the prestigious Israel Prize. Barely past 40, he adds with a smile: "My being there cut the average age of Israel Prize recipients by half. But in fact, while the prize is for a 'Life's Work,' the prize is not mine. It belongs to the thousands of volunteers who give of their heart and soul to help."

This teamwork has succeeded, as Yad Sara now lends 272 different types of equipment, a total of 236,000 items. While walkers and vaporizers are still on the list high-tech devices have been added, including electronic monitors to warn when a sleep-apnea-prone infant has stopped breathing.

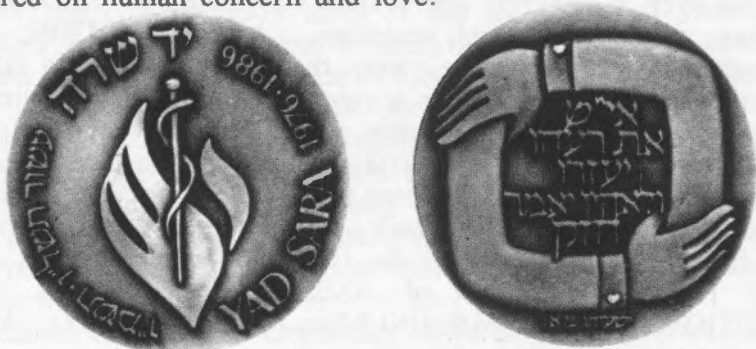
Although equipment loans remain the backbone of Yad Sara's services, it has gradually added many new ones according to the needs of those who need them. In a bureaucracy, when a need is discovered, officials hope responsibility does not come under their aegis, because it means headaches. But when volunteers find distress and suggest solution, they put their heart and soul into finding an answer. Thus, Yad Sara expanded with new services, including a laundry service for the bedridden and incontinent; the Nechonit van for transporting the disabled to doctors, shopping or visits to relatives; emergency beepers for those who live alone; round the clock oxygen supplies; hot meals on wheels; home visits; a dental clinic for the elderly; a coffee house

for old people to eat in and be entertained; a grandpa/grandma sitting service; and a day-care center for the severely disabled. It also introduced a small home repair service in Jerusalem, with volunteers putting up shelves, changing light bulbs, installing peep-holes and door security chains and unclogging drains for elderly people unable to fend for themselves.

Aware of the fact that most of their wheelchairs and walkers were imported and very expensive, Yad Sara established a workshop and hired middle-aged immigrants to assemble imported parts. Not only did this reduce the cost of equipment, but it also provided a decent wage for otherwise unemployable new immigrants. A group of prisoners have recently been trained to repair broken medical equipment. In addition, Yad Sara volunteers have been trained to give emotional support to patients who just discovered they have cancer.

As for the future, Lupoliansky looks forward to the end of 1995 when Yad Sara will bring together its many services in Jerusalem and establish its national headquarters in a building to be constructed near Mt. Herzl. No government funds have been promised, but the land was donated by the Israel Lands Administration.

Yad Sara is unique. "It has been a model to other organizations here and abroad," Lupoliansky says. "The Joint Distribution Committee came to learn how we do things and intends to open Jewish centers in Russia. Representatives from Denmark South Africa and various parts of the US have done so as well. "They are trying to uncover our secret: how to run an organization like a well-oiled machine, yet have it powered on human concern and love."



A graphic design of Hebrew letters which are the initials of Yad Sara in the form of a hand, symbolizing the helping hand of Yad Sara are shown on the obverse of the IGCMC State Medal of Yad Sara issued in 1987. The test tube and snake symbolize the medical work of Yad Sara. with the words, Yad Sara 1976-1986, in Hebrew and English. The reverse shows one hand supporting another and in the middle, the verse "Each one shall help his neighbor and tell his brother to be strong" (Isaiah 41.6) in Hebrew, which expresses the motto of Yad Sara. (The first Hebrew word in the verse also represents the initials of the Yad Sara Association.

The ALPH BETH Page

...Dedicated to the Beginner

by *Edward Janis*



Q. In Haffner's "Israel's Money & Medals" I notice various descriptions using the words legend and inscription in describing a coin or medal. For example, on the reverse of the Pidyon Haben coins of 1973-1975, the Hebrew quotation surrounded by the five silver shekels is called an "INSCRIPTION" and the other lettering that starts on the bottom and follows the rim upward is a Hebrew "LEGEND" translating to Coin of Redemption. I'm confused. When is an inscription, title or a motto called an INSCRIPTION or a LEGEND on a coin?

H.L. Philadelphia

A. Most Coins are round. Because of this, the lines of words near the edge, follow the circle of the coin in an arc that is equidistant and parallel to the edge and is therefor in a curved line. This by agreement, over a hundred years ago, was called a LEGEND by diemakers, numismatists and sculptors. An INSCRIPTION, on the other hand, by mutual usage, were the letters or words that run across the field of a medal or a coin. Simply LEGENDS circle the borders of a coin or medal, while INSCRIPTIONS usually follow a straight line or lines. If you are still confused, take a Lincoln cent out of your pocket. Note that I said cent not penny. There is no such U.S. coin as a penny. Turn to the back, tail side or reverse of the cent. Above the Lincoln Memorial is the LEGEND, curved and in an arc, reading UNITED STATES of AMERICA. Below this is the INSCRIPTION, E PLURIBUS UNUM in two straight lines. All clear now?

Q. At a recent flea market, a dealer showed me a 25 Pruta coin of 1949 and called it an error. I looked at it and could find nothing wrong. Was the dealer trying to fool me?

S.K. Norfolk, Va.

A No. He is correct. Whereas it is proper and correct to have a One Pruta coin, the 25 Pruta coin should have been coined with the plural legend, 25 Prutot. Note that in the following Agora series which started in 1960 has One Agora coins. The 25 denomination is in the correct plural and is called 25 Agorot.

Metals in Coins

by Shmuel Aviezer

The metal composition of the first known coin, namely the coin from Lydia in Asia Minor from the 7th century B.C.E., was the electrum, a natural alloy of gold and silver found in the river Pactolus.

Ancient Jewish coins from the Hasmonean period (165 B.C.E.) through the Jewish war against Rome (66-70 C.E.) to the Bar Kochba revolt (132-135 C.E.) were all of bronze composition. Moreover, during the four years of Jewish revolt in Jerusalem and in order to give expression of independence and freedom, prestigious silver coins were issued in the sheqel denomination, an act which was the sole privilege of the Roman Emperor.

In the long centuries of foreign rule in the Holyland, from the Persian, Greek and Roman rules through the Byzantine, Arab and Ottoman periods, a span of 24 centuries, the metal composition of the coins were mostly in bronze in the lower denominations and silver and gold in higher face values.

That was also the situation in other parts of the civilized world. The intrinsic value of the metal guided the fixing of face value. People obviously trusted the value of the coin as relevant to its metal contents. That is one of the reasons why reeds were applied to gold and silver coins to deter profiteers from their "shaving" and thus accumulate valuable metal dust.

Use of the copper-nickel alloy in the last hundred years or so constituted an important breakthrough in the minting of coins. The continued increases in the value of silver and gold in world markets obliged issuing governments to look for an enduring alloy at reasonable cost that could withstand the strenuousness of circulation. Public attitude towards the means of payment, whether coins or banknotes were gradually channeled to put trust in the issuing authorities and their commitments in safeguarding the value of the currency than to the physical value of the metals of which the coins are made.

Nowadays the bulk of circulation coins in higher values, all over the world, is made of this copper-nickel alloy, which is composed of 75% copper and 25% nickel. This percentage of nickel contents comes to bestow a silvery look on the coins without the need to use silver content or silver plating. A considerable part of lower valued coins are produced in different compositions of bronze, ranging from a reddish to a golden look, depending on the percentage of copper content. A fair portion of the lowest denominations are struck in aluminum being the cheapest metal suitable for use in coins.

Apart from the above mentioned widely used alloys various issuing authorities have been seeking after even more diversified compositions of metals to serve many purposes.

- a) Saving costs in the minting process to meet increasing needs for coins.
- b) Incorporation of new higher denominations within an established series without resorting to having to issue coins in inconvenient larger diameters.
- c) Exploiting cheaper metals in a more efficient composition that would lower costs without marring the coins silvery appearance.
- d) Endowing higher value coins with a golden look without applying gold;
- e) Formulating suitable alloys with magnetic characteristics that fit the use in the widely-spreading automatic vending machines and are immune to forgery.
- f) Sophisticated combining of alloys, in bimetallic composition, to forestall improving methods of counterfeiting, in addition to bestowing attractive look to a usually high value coin.

The more known of these metal compositions are:

- 1) Steel-clad bronze - used in lower value Italian and Greek coins.
- 2) Nickel-clad bronze - used in U.S. coins: 10 Cents, 25 cents, 1/2 dollar and the old 33 mm large dollar.
- 3) Nickel-bonded steel - a Canadian alloy widely used by South American countries.
- 4) Aureate - golden looking alloy which has been used for the Dutch 5 guilders, Spanish 100 pesetas, Canadian one dollar and one pound sterling.
- 5) Pure nickel - this is used in some Canadian and U.S. coins due to historical reasons but bound to be exchanged by more conventional alloys.
- 6) Bimetallic composition - This is the most striking innovation in the metal composition of a coin since the introduction of the copper-nickel alloy.

The basic concept of exploiting bi-metallic structure for a coin has been born in order to place serious obstacles before a forger of coins. The idea is to insert the core of the coin, made of one alloy, into the collar of the other alloy, with the design traversing both. The alloys so far implemented are the copper-nickel, bronze and nickel alloys.

The first use of the bi-metallic combination was made by Italy when in 1982 a 500 lire coin was issued, placing the bronze alloy in the center with the copper-nickel collar surrounding it (by the way, this coin is the only one known to carry Braille characters to indicate the denomination).

The French mint produced the second bi-metallic coin in 1988 in the denomination of 10 francs, but in inverse combination of the alloys: The core in nickel enfolded by a copper collar. A year later Portugal followed with a 100 escudos coin in the Italian pattern combination. Two coins in the same duo-metal finish were issued in 1991 in the then Soviet Union. France added, in late 1992, a 20 francs coin in the same bi-metallic composition as with the 10 francs.

Israeli coins from the start adopted the most commonly used alloys. Lower denominations in the pruta and agora series were struck in aluminum. Medium denominations were invariably produced in bronze alloy, mostly in the copper-92%, aluminum-6% and nickel-2% composition. An exception was made in striking the ten new agorot of the first sheqel series in 1980, when the alloy chosen was 92% copper and 8% nickel, with the purpose of achieving a reddish looking coin that is discernible from other bronze coins. The copper-nickel composition dominated most of the higher valued coins in the pound and sheqel series up to the current NIS 5.- coin.

The Bank of Israel has recently placed into circulation a new metallic version of the NIS 1.- struck on a different alloy other than the currently used copper-nickel: on nickel bonded steel. The new coins carry a distinguishing mark: a tiny dot under the state emblem on the theme side. This alloy preserves the look of the current coin but results in a considerable savings in the cost of minting..

The most exciting news that has been disclosed by the Bank of Israel Currency Department is that in the beginning of 1995, a new 10 sheqalim coin will be issued to gradually replace the banknote of the same denomination now in circulation. This coin, in line with the new world trend in higher denominations, will be struck in bi-metallic alloy - golden inside core embraced by a silvery ring - in a diameter of 23 mm.

Undoubtedly, this coin will eventually don the crown of dominance in the long and varied history of Israeli currency.

Notice of AINA Election

In accordance with the A.I.N.A. By-laws, the terms of office of three positions on the Board of Governors expire in May. These positions are currently occupied by Mel Wacks, J.J. Van Grover and Nathan Sobel.

This notice is a call for nominations for these positions. Any member of A.I.N.A., in good standing, may apply to the A.I.N.A. office for a nominating petition, and be listed on the election ballot.

The deadline for the filing of these petitions is March 1st, 1995.

The Lee Max Friedman Medal by Edward Schuman

Among medals sculpted by the late Paul Vincze is a uniface award presentation medal of the American Jewish Historical Society which has the portrait of Lee Max Friedman. While much has been written about Vincze, the numismatic fraternity knows little about the bespectacled gentleman whose portrait is shown.

Max L. Friedman was born in 1871 in Memphis, Tenn. of German Jewish parents. He was a lawyer by profession, a historian by hobby, and a patron of education. He became a noted trial attorney in Boston and a teacher and pundit of law. He served as vice-president and professor of law at Portia Law School, Boston, contributing learned articles to law journals.



He was immensely intrigued with American Jewish history, and in 1903 began his association with the American Jewish Historical Society eventually serving as president (1948-53) and honorary president (1953-57). In 1905 he was chairman of the celebration in Boston of the 250th Anniversary of Jewish Settlement in the United States, and half a century later he was the main speaker at Symphony Hall, Boston, on the occasion of the tercentenary.

As a historian, Friedman contributed many articles and notes to the publications of the American Jewish Historical Society covering a wide range of subjects that included Judah Monis, Cotton Mather, and Aaron Lopez. The volumes he published in the field of Jewish history included some of European Jewish interest. He presented many books and manuscripts to the American Jewish Historical Society.

His approach to cultural, philanthropic, civic, and communal endeavors was conservative. He served in leading positions with the Boston Art Museum, Harvard College Library, General Theological Library, and Boston Public Library. A bequest in his will enabled the Society to build its own headquarters adjoining Brandeis University. Lee Max Friedman died in 1957, but he is eternalize with this award medal by the society he contributed so much to.

COLLECTING HEBREW AMULETS AND CHARMS

אסף קמיעות ושמירות עברית

by Simcha Kuritzky, NLG

One of the joys of numismatics is the ability to own a piece of history, an item that tells one about the art, economics, values, and ideas of a time long gone. This is especially true when the item speaks to us of our own culture, as experienced by our forebears. Most numismatists collect coins from their ancestral homeland; but, for Jews, the long Diaspora has severely limited this conventional option.

A collecting specialty that I have found to be particularly rich in Jewish history and culture is Hebrew amulets. An amulet is a device worn to protect oneself against bad luck or to bring on good luck. Every culture has amulets of one kind or another. The Talmud describes amulets made out of roots, stones, and Biblical inscriptions on parchment. While the Chinese, Catholics, and Hindus have been issuing metallic amulets for a millennium or more, Jewish amulets in metal only go back about 300 years. This is due, in part, to the questionable status amulets have under Jewish law.

Every society has two components: the normative, which consists of the official rules, and the positive, in which one finds what people really do. Normative Judaism is strictly monotheistic; there are no partners to God. There are strict regulations prohibiting the worship of other supernatural beings, such as angels and demons, and the practice of divination and other forms of magic by the laity. Official rules to the contrary, Jews picked up many of the practices of their pagan (and later, Christian and Moslem) neighbors, though attributed the power behind the charm or spell to the God of Israel; and would pray to God to send a particular angel to help them, or to keep them safe from specified or unspecified demons. Jews also attributed magical powers to many Jewish religious practices, such as the reciting of Biblical verses (especially the psalms), the circumcision ceremony, and the Priestly Benediction service.

Many rabbis viewed the wearing of amulets as a forbidden gentile practice; while others prepared amulets (in part to prevent Jews from going to gentiles to get them).

Before the Haskata (Age of Reason), amulet usage was widespread throughout European and Middle Eastern Jewry. Some of these amulets were prepared by mystics and contain Kabbalistic inscriptions or cryptic formulae, but most amulets were prepared and used by non-mystics and have conventional inscriptions.

Hebrew metallic amulets generally fall into three categories: good luck pieces, personal amulets, and religious pieces. By far the most common are good luck pieces. These are mostly issued in this century by religious institutions to donors. They are massproduced, and made of brass or some other base metal.

On the opposite extreme are personal amulets. These are usually hand engraved on silver, though cast or die-struck amulets are known. Most of these pieces were made in Persia or Kurdistan before 1800, and are rare. The last category is a kind of catch-all, and includes machine-struck and cast devotional pieces, issued not only by Jews, but also by Christians and neo-Pagan mystics who believed in the supernatural powers of the Hebrew language and letters.

1. Good Luck Pieces

Most of the Hebrew good luck pieces I have encountered are from Jewish yeshivot (seminaries) and charitable institutions in New York and Israel. They always have English inscriptions (though they don't always identify the issuer), and sometimes have words or passages in Hebrew. Unlike most older amulets, good luck pieces often include pictorial designs. Among the designs I have seen are:

- two lions of Judah flanking the Ten Commandments
- large shield of David housing צִיּוֹן Zion, and sometimes also the Ten Commandments
- seven-branched menorah (candelabrum) with olive branch
- two hands performing the Blessing of the Kohanim (adapted by Leonard Nimoy as the Vulcan salute)
- small shields of David, busts of children or elderly, representing those whom the institution helps
- the building housing the institution
- reproductions of ancient Jewish coins

The inscriptions on these amulets include such straight-forward wishes as GOOD FORTUNE (מוֹל טוֹב), CHAI LIFE (חַי), GOOD LUCK (יִשְׁמְרָה טוֹבָה), KEEP HOLY THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, (עֲזִיז) (study), HELP US AND GOD WILL HELP YOU, KAMEA AMULET (קַמִּיעַ), and (בְּרָכָה הַצְלָחָה) (blessings and prosperity). There are also a number of Biblical passages with a similar emphasis, in Hebrew and/or English including

ברוך אתה בבאך ברוך אתה בצאתך

Blessed are you arriving, blessed are you leaving

Deuteronomy 28:

ישמר ד' צאתך ובואך

May the Lord guard your going out and coming in

Psalms 121:8

ד' ישמרך מכל רע

The Lord shall guard you from all evil

Psalms 121:7

יברך ד' וישמרך: יאך ד' פניו אליך ויחנך

ישא ד' פניו אליך וישם לך שלום:

May the Lord bless thee and keep thee. May the Lord let His face shine unto thee and show thee favor. May the Lord lift up His countenance unto thee and give thee peace.

Numbers 6:24-26 (Blessing of the Kohanim)

2. Personal Amulets

Personal amulets belong to a world of what we condescendingly call superstition. Most of them were designed to ward off the **עין הרע** Ayin HaRa (Evil Eye), which is a curse invoked by jealousy; or malevolent demons or ghosts, particularly Lilith, the Queen of Demons, who was fond of killing new mothers and their infant children. Whereas the Biblical inscriptions mentioned above are easily deciphered, those on personal amulets can be quite cryptic. First, they are often given in **נוטריקון** notarikon (acronym) form; and second, their assumed powers may have nothing to do with the literal meaning of the passage.

Biblical passages commonly found on classic Jewish amulets include:

הא לכם זרע, short for **הלז**

Here is seed for you

Genesis 47:23, for fertility

בפי בפע עבצע, short for

בן פרת יוסף בן פרת עלי עין בנות צערה עלי שור

A fruitful bough is Joseph, fruitful bough by a spring, its branches run over a wall

Genesis 49:22, for protection against the Evil Eye

שויתי י' לנגדי תמיד, short for **שילת**

I have always set the Lord before me

Psalms 16:8

יהוד כלך and **כמיל לבד**, initial and final letters of **כי מלאכיו יצוה לך לשמרך בכל דרכיך**

For He will cause His angels to guard you in all your ways

Psalms 91:11

עזרי מעם י' עשה שמים וארץ, short for **עמי עשו** My help comes from God, Creator of Heaven and Earth

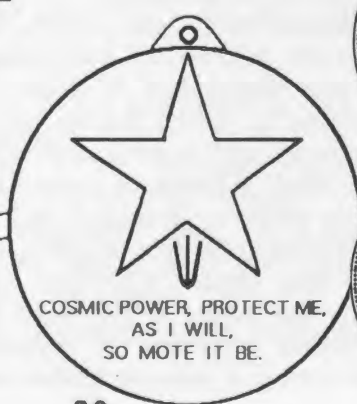
Psalms 121:2

Names of God and angels are also quite common on older amulets. The most common angel names are **ארגמן** Argaman (literally, purple, one of the colors used in building the Mishkan) and the full names of the constituent archangels **אוריאל** Uriel, **רפאל** Raphael, **גבריאל** Gabriel, **מיכאל** Michael and **נוריאל** Nuriel. Also popular are the three angels who are believed to have control over Lilith: **סנוי** Sanvi, **סנסנוי** Sansanvi, and **סמנגלף** Semangelaf.

There are two types of God's Names used on amulets: variations on the Tetragrammaton, and names derived from other sources. The Tetragrammaton, God's Name of Four Letters, is considered so holy by Jews that it is never pronounced and usually is not even written, for fear of desecrating it (in this article, the symbols **ד** and **י** are used in place of this Name). Christian amulets and even coins have regularly used it, but when it was used by Jews, the maker usually rearranged the Name's letters, or substituted the letters succeeding the normal ones (using a process known as **תמורה** temura).



וען	אס	פנו	אמס	חא	צפ	ים
תר	מס	הכו	וכת	צוא	וס	
גה	עא	אר	4	א	ר	מר
פצ	תש	קא	קונ	ו	צ	הש
המל	ימכ	ימי	יעי	י	מ	אומ
זאוף	כר	כג	קט	לנע	מ	תס
ליו	וכת	ורת	כא	המ	ש	



Following are Names of God often encountered on amulets:

יה

Yah, the first half of the Tetragrammaton

יוד הא ואו הא

Name of Forty-Five, the Tetragrammaton spelled out

כוזו

Succeeding letters of the Tetragrammaton

יאהוונהי or אידהניה

Name of Eight Letters, interweaving the letters
of the Tetragrammaton and "Lord."

שדי

Almighty

אתה גבור לעולם אדני, אגלא

AGLA, acronym of "You are mighty forever, Lord"

אנקתם פסתם פספסים דיונסים

Name of Twenty-Two Letters

אבגיתן קרעשטן נגדיכש בטדצתג חקבטנע יגלעזק שקוציה

Name of Forty-Two Letters

3. Religious pieces

Any number of items can fall into this category. Jewish religious pieces include mass-produced medals with prayers on them, such as שמע ישראל ד' אלקינו ד' אחד the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4), or various psalms. These differ from good luck pieces in that there is nothing on them to indicate that they are supposed to bring good luck, and they differ from personal amulets in that they are mass produced. Christian medals in Hebrew, usually portraying Jesus and containing Hebrew inscriptions describing the messiah, fit in this category. There are also modern mystical medals, with astrological symbols, magic squares where the numerals are Hebrew letters, fanciful angel names, and Hebrew inscriptions using special alphabets, such as celestial or angel script (these letters resemble constellations drawn on celestial maps).

Conclusion

Amulet collecting is educational and fun. Hebrew good luck pieces are often available from token and medal dealers for \$1-10, and there are a large variety of them. If you want a challenge, personal amulets and religious pieces are more difficult to find. Most are carried by Judaica specialists, along with other non-numismatic antiquities and religious artifacts, and are priced in the \$50-150 range. However, acquiring the amulet is only half the fun; acquiring an understanding of what its inscriptions mean and who issued them is the other half.

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Life and Death of the Jews of St. Eustatius

by Samuel S. Strouse

Here Lye the Remains of the Worthy youth Haim de Leon who departed this Life on Sunday being the Eve of the Grand Day of Atonement in the year 5547 of the Creation which Answers to the 7(th) day of October Anno 1787. He was for his Virtues, his fear of God, Obedience to his Parents, fair dealings with all man-kind beloved by every one who had the Pleasure, of his acquaintance. He was snatched from this troublesome world to Enjoy Eternal bliss at the Age of Nineteen.

These are the words carved on a slab of marble that marks the last resting place of Chaim de Leon. "Statia," as Chaim probably called this place, is a tiny dot on the map, just nine miles square, 125 miles southeast of the Virgin Islands and about five hundred miles northeast of the South American mainland. Statia, which in the latter part of the eighteenth century played a significant role in a forgotten episode in the early history of the United States, also has a place in the history of the Jews of the Western Hemisphere.

Chaim de Leon's home was a place of picturesque and striking tropical beauty. On the west coast of this tiny island was a deep-water anchorage that harbored sailing ships of many nations. For almost two miles, a double row of warehouses with thick stone walls lined the waterfront. These walls bulged with merchandise of all kinds, brought from Europe for transshipment to the ports of the American continents. In the warehouses were large stocks of bronze and cast-iron cannon, muskets, cutlasses and gunpowder, all guarded day and night.

In 1776 Statia had a population of 150 white settlers and twelve hundred Negroes, but it was destined to grow in a few short years until its nine square miles were packed with thirty thousand people. By then it was bigger than Boston and its commerce outranked any North American port, but bloodshed and disaster intervened. Its prosperity vanished, its commerce ceased and its population declined to barely more than one thousand, including its important Jewish community. The island's residents gradually drifted away to find other homes on islands in the West Indies or in the new United States.

On the morning of November 16, 1776, Chaim de Leon, then a lad of eight, stood with the other citizens of Statia watching a drama unfold. The whole population of the town of Oranjestad had gathered on the ramparts of Fort Oranje, several hundred feet above the harbor and the warehouses below, to get a better look at the man-of-war coming about into the wind, preparatory to anchoring in the roadstead. Across the stern of the brigantine could be read her name and home port; she was the *ANDREW DORIA*, out of Philadelphia.

From the ship, anchored a few yards offshore, a shouted command came across the water as an ensign was hoisted at her mainmast. Caught by the brisk breeze, the banner was extended to its full breadth to reveal alternate horizontal red and white stripes and a design of thirteen stars in a circle on a blue background.

Standing on a stone observation platform at the highest point of Fort Oranje was Johannes de Graaf, the acting governor of Saint Eustatius and the representative of the States General of The Netherlands. He was troubled and bewildered, for though the flag was strange, he rightly conjectured that it was the emblem of the thirteen colonies struggling for independence from Great Britain. Courtesy demanded that a salute be fired from the guns of the fort, but to fire such a salute to the rebels would be to commit an overt act of unfriendliness to Great Britain.

International courtesy called for a thirteen-gun salute, but de Graaf, seeking a compromise, ordered the gunners to fire eleven guns as a gesture of recognition that also satisfied his own indecision. Johannes de Graaf didn't know it, but he had earned a niche in history, for he had ordered the first salute by a foreign power to the flag of the United States.

Other witnesses to this event were the crew members of a small sailing vessel that immediately weighed anchor and headed for the nearest British island of St. Kitts. There the British governor was informed that the Dutch had recognized the American rebels. He, in turn, relayed the news to London, where the British Admiralty learned of this unfriendly act toward the Crown. This was the forerunner of death, destruction and disaster for St. Eustatius. It was also the first act in a tragedy that caused the dissolution of the island's Jewish community.

Five years elapsed before Admiral Sir George Rodney led a powerful British fleet into the harbor of Oranjestad on February 3, 1781. The British systematically tore down the walls of the strongly built warehouses, confiscated their rich stores of goods and condemned the island of St. Eustatius to oblivion in world affairs. As a result, twelve to twenty-five Jewish families, descendants of refugees from the Spanish Inquisition, found themselves in the role of fugitives. For them no further livelihood was possible. With overwhelming sadness, they abandoned the synagogue they had so proudly built and took leave of their dead, buried in a cemetery on the edge of the town. Tenderly and reverently, they removed the Torahs from the Ark and extinguished the Ner Tamid. Then, old and young, sick and well, hopeful and despondent, they left St. Eustatius forever.

Where had this Jewish community come from? What had brought them to this tiny Caribbean island? The answers take us back to 1492, the year Spain expelled the Jews and the year Columbus discovered America. Most of the refugees went to North Africa and Turkey. Some remained on the Iberian peninsula as Marranos or crypto-Jews,

practicing Judaism secretly while outwardly professing Christianity. Some of the exiles made their way to London and others to Amsterdam. It is on the latter that our attention focuses.

In 1622, with the strong support of the Dutch Government, the Dutch West India Company was founded to trade with the Caribbean islands. In this large and powerful enterprise, Dutch Jews owned or controlled 25 percent of the stock. The reason was simple: these Jews had friends and relatives in the Spanish and Portuguese possessions of the Caribbean.

Whether the objective was trade or a military expedition, such an arrangement was bound to yield benefits to the Dutch West India Co.. As a convenient and important example, the Company captured the Brazilian port of Recife or Pernambuco from the Portuguese in 1631. Recife was large and prosperous, and by 1640, Jews outnumbered all other Europeans by a margin of two to one. In 1648 there were more than five thousand Jews in this community, but in September 1654, Recife was recaptured by the Portuguese and the Inquisition was again destined to carry out its work of persecution and death.

The date 1654 is significant not only because it marks the death of the Recife community, but because it is the birth date of numerous other Jewish communities in the New World, not the least of which is New Amsterdam. These Jews sought new homes in the Caribbean and it is believed that this accounted for the settlement at St. Eustatius. In 1738 the Jews of Statia erected a home for the Congregation *HONEN DALLIM* which means "Gracious to the Lowly." We know very little of their affairs until 1772, when a hurricane razed the synagogue and necessitated an appeal to other congregations for help. The minutes of Congregation Shearith Israel in New York tell us that a freewill offering at Passover yielded thirty-eight pounds, ten shillings and six pence— then about eighty dollars —which was sent to aid the stricken congregation. Many such appeals reached Shearith Israel, also known as the Spanish-Portuguese Congregation of New York. One of the appeals from St. Eustatius was for a rabbi, and in 1774 Rabbi Ezekiel was sent to the little Dutch island as its spiritual leader. Actually, there is not too much known about Jewish life on Saint Eustatius. There is a legend that members of the family of Baruch Spinoza who left Holland and disappeared in the West Indies may have settled in Statia.

The Congregation *HONEN DALLIM* of St. Eustatius is mentioned occasionally in the history of Shearith Israel of New York. Although the lower town of St. Eustatius and all its commercial buildings were torn down by Admiral Rodney in 1781, he cannot be charged with anti-Semitism. The synagogue destruction was the result of a hurricane; there is no evidence of fire or willful destruction in the ruins as they can be seen today.

The Jews, as did their Dutch Christian fellow nationals, lost their property and businesses as well as their contacts with the Dutch West

India Co.. With characteristic energy and disaster fostered courage, they decided to move to an other island where fortune would be kinder. In 1796, they settled their families in St. Thomas, then under friendly Danish rule. Here a congregation already existed and, with the aid of the Statia Jews, a synagogue was erected. St. Thomas's community of twenty-two families, supplemented by arrivals from England and Statia, ultimately grew to sixty-four. In 1804 the St. Thomas synagogue burned with many valuable records, but by 1812 a new house of worship was built and a still larger one was erected on the same site in 1823. Fire again destroyed the sanctuary in 1831, but two years later a new building was erected. It can be seen today in Charlotte Amalie, the principal city of the now American island of St. Thomas.

There are only three different types of coinage known to have been used on Saint Eustatius. Stuiver denomination coins, countermarked with an incuse S E on French New Guiana Two Sous were official. These were followed by a wide variety of worn silver and billon coins with a raised S E which are regarded as contemporary counterfeits.

Under the British occupation, 1809-1812, those many countermarked coins of various metals already in circulation were re-countermarked with an additional P. It goes without saying that all of these issues are pretty rare and hard to find.



Spanish colonial 8 reales, cut into sections and counterstamped with various marks also served in the region's monetary system. In 1794, the directors of the Dutch West Indies colonies went to the Dutch mint asking that a distinctive mark be placed on their coins similar to those of the East India Co. A Two Stuiver coin of 1794 with a large W above the date is the result.



St. Eustatius is barely known to the traveler today; even the ubiquitous American tourist does not include it in his itinerary. The grave of young Chaim de Leon is still there; the inscription on the stone is just as presented it above.

Although the grave is seldom visited, it has a message for those who contemplate the unbroken continuity of Jewish history. The first name of the nineteen-year-old youth buried there is *CHAIM* - a reminder of life, not of death.

At The Edge by Shmuel Aviezer

It is common knowledge that every coin has two sides: The obverse, where the theme, either a portrait or another subject, is depicted, and the reverse, on which the denomination is usually displayed.

Yet, there is a third side: The edge.

Minting authorities at all times gave this dimension a special treatment. The plain look invariably dominated the ancient coins, but with the introduction of more advanced minting presses, using collars to embrace the coin while being struck, it was possible to variegate the finished look of the coin's edge.

It is usually conceived that the idea of applying reeds at the edge of a coin, made of gold or silver, emanated from the need to prevent its "shaving" by profiteers. Nowadays, with circulating coins struck mostly on less valuable metal composition, such as copper-nickel, aluminum and bronze, the finishing of the edge became a part of the overall design of the coin. Different finishings were chosen to primarily facilitate easier identification, exploitings ophisticated equipment to achieve commendable results.

Hereafter are the main commonly-practiced finishings of the coin's edge, citing examples of Israeli and foreign coins:

- 1..Reeds in high density: About 120 to 150 reeds around the coin. Examples: Israeli half pound of 1963 and ten new agorot of 1980.
- 2..Wide reeds: 80 to 90 around the coin. Example: 5 sheqalim 1982.
- 3..Dense reeds incused with inscription: The new five guilders of Netherlands, 1988.
- 4..Slant-structured wide and deep reeds: 100 sheqalim, 1984 and the Two French Francs coin.
- 5..Alternatingly milled and smooth: One Israeli pound 1967 and one (old) sheqel, 1981.
- 6..Incused inscription on a plain edge: Israeli Independence Day coins.
- 7..Incused stars or symbols on a plain background: British one pound coin.
- 8..Elevated stars or symbols on plain background: Swiss five francs coin.
- 9..Plain edge: All the coins of the Israeli new sheqel series introduced in 1985.

A sister-element of the coin's edge is the "rim". This refers to the raised line that borders the obverse and reverse all around. The rim helps stacking the coins one upon the other while protecting the designs from pressing on each other.

Reeded edges, in their different forms as described above, are produced simultaneously with the automatic striking of the coin. Yet, in applying raised or incused elements, as on Israeli Independence Day coins, additional pass through a special press is necessary.

Syrian Jews – Free at Last by Larry Yudelson

The Zionist movement in Syria, because of the political situation, never had legal status and could not operate openly. It was viewed as a movement seeking to steal Palestine from the Arabs. It is believed that about 9000 Jews immigrated to Palestine from Syria during the period of the British Mandate, the vast majority of them illegally. Much of this immigration took place during the 1930-1940 period when Arab nationalism was at its height, and by a Nazi threat in the form of Vichy France's occupation of Syria.

The publicized arrival in Israel last October of the Chief Rabbi on Syria, Abraham Hamra, has lifted the curtain on an operation that had quietly brought 3,800 Jews out of Syria since President Assad permitted emigration in 1992. Rabbi Hamra's arrival also has allowed for the publication, the first time, of the 46-year history of how the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (called JDC) secretly helped Jews in Damascus, Aleppo and elsewhere in Syria with money it received from the United Jewish Appeal.

The JDC files on Syrian Jewry document the amazing isolation of Syria and its Jews from the Western world for nearly 30 years. It was an isolation, imposed by a succession of Syrian dictatorships and by the fears of Syrian Jews, which made American Jewish aid to the community for many years more a matter of good intentions and guesswork than planning and philanthropic oversight. The JDC archives also show that the failure of Syrian Jewry to reach the public communal agenda reflected a deliberate policy decision.

"It is fair to say that publicity focused on this community would worsen rather than have helped their plight," one JDC official said to reassure a Springfield, Mass. rabbi, who had asked in 1964 why Jewish newspapers were not carrying stories about Syrian Jewry. If most American Jews did not know they were quietly helping the Jews in Syria, it is also fair to say that until the 1970's the JDC knew less than it would have liked about the state of the Syrian Jewish community, which traces its history back more than 2,000 years.

As the Syrian Jewish community was shaken by the emerging conflict between Syria and Israel, news of riots and arrests reached the JDC only after long delay. The organization depended on second-hand reports from American diplomats in Beirut to learn of the December 1947 riots against Aleppo Jews, which left 120 Jewish families penniless and destroyed synagogues. Following the riots, 6,000 of its 10,000 Jews fled in a clandestine emigration.

It was during this period, as Syria became the standard-bearer in the war against the State of Israel, that the JDC also learned, many months after the fact, that Syria had greeted the birth of the State of Israel by arresting several hundred Jews, closing their businesses and leaving 600 families destitute.

The secret flight of Jews continued until the government cracked down in 1951. From then on the Jewish community was subject to the scrutiny of the Mukhabarat secret police, varying degrees of restrictions on travel and trade, discrimination in employment and studies and arbitrary failings. The Jews were, however, allowed to continue their religious life. Synagogues and Jewish secular schools remained open.

At the core of Syria's policies toward its Jews was a fierce opposition to emigration. "If we let them go, they will go to Israel. They will marry, have children and 20 years from now their children will be fighting our boys," a Syrian Foreign Ministry official said, explaining the policy at one point to Stephen Shalom, the son of Isaac Shalom, a Syrian émigré to Brooklyn who in recent years traveled to Syria to aid the Jewish community there.

The situation worsened particularly in 1956, as tensions in the Middle East heightened, eventually leading to war between Israel and Egypt that October. All the Jewish homes in Kamichli were marked with red paint at one point that spring, and although the marks were soon removed, the implied threat of a pogrom was clear enough. A number of anti-Jewish laws were passed prohibiting the sale of Jewish owned property and freezing Jewish bank accounts. Many Jews were put on trial because a relative had escaped to freedom. Many had their property confiscated and Palestine refugees were housed in the homes vacated in the Jewish quarters in Damascus and Aleppo. Others were required to visit the police station daily, and many were imprisoned without trial. A decree was enacted which prohibited Jews from traveling more than three miles beyond the limits off their home towns.

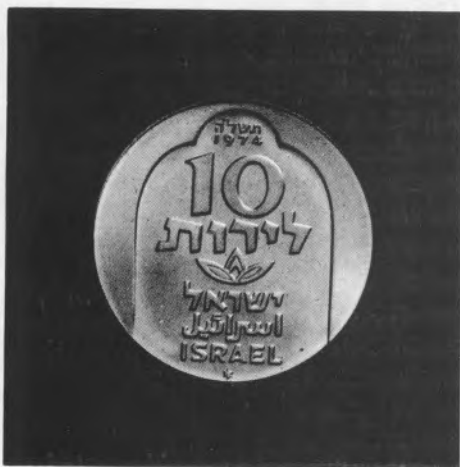
After the Six Day War, many were arrested and assaulted by the Muslim population. Jews were murdered in Damascus, Aleppo and in Qamishli, near the Turkish border, but because of the strict censorship no exact details are known.

"We are suffering so deeply that nobody outside of Syria can imagine what we are suffering actually," wrote members of the community in a letter to Isaac Shalom, signed only "Aleppo's Jews."

It was not until 1977 that the first legal and public departures took place. Following public intervention from Rep. Stephen Solarz of New York and United States President Carter, Syrian President Assad allowed the release of 14 unmarried women. They were part of a group of 400 young women who could not be married because of the hundreds of young men who had sneaked out of the country. Following this first group, in a quiet exodus that is coming to light only now, two or three women departed each month, until more than 350 had left.

In the 1980s, President Assad eased travel restrictions somewhat, and some Jews emigrated. However, with exit visas not being given to complete families, the community remained trapped in Syria.

"I always saw them as pawns the Syrians were using in their dealings with Israel," Stephen Shalom said in a recent interview. "Nothing ever happened until the [current] peace process started going in 1991." It was his father, Isaac Shalom, who first approached the JDC on behalf of the New York-based Near East Jewish Aid Society in 1947, asking for emergency relief in the wake of the Aleppo riots. This led to an aid channel that was to continue for 30 years. The JDC allocated money – about \$10,000 a month – to the Aid Society, which wired the funds to bank accounts in Beirut or Damascus. From there, the money was allocated for education, health and relief by trusted members of Syria's three Jewish communities.



The ninth in the series of Hanukka coins (5735–1974) depicts a Damascus lamp dating from the 18th century. Within the center, the front of the Damascus lamp is embossed inside an incuse figure of a gate with three arches. On both sides of the gate are two pillars. The eight branched lamp is surrounded by fronds and leaves. Between the leaves, towards the upper part of the gate two birds are perched with a rosette between them. In a semicircle beneath the lamp is the legend in Hebrew "An 18th Century Hanukka Lamp from Damascus."

Syria, which gained its independence in 1946, made life impossible for its Jewish minority. Of the thirty thousand Jews who lived there, some twenty thousand made their way to Palestine within two years of Syrian independence, and during the 1950's another five thousand managed to escape.

The Syrian Hanukka lamp was meant to serve as a reminder that the remnants of the Jewish community in Damascus, Aleppo and Kamishli were slowly dying in captivity, locked in ghettos, exposed to humiliation, denied elementary rights, cut off from any source of livelihood, awaiting the day they could emerge from darkness into light, from servitude to freedom.

Large & Small in Israel Currency

by Shmuel Aviezer

* The largest banknote ever issued in Israel, dated 1960, was denominated in 50 Israeli pounds. Its size was 178mm X 93mm (For comparison, the uniform size of the current Israeli banknotes is 138mm X 76mm). This banknote depicting two young pioneers, was also the most enduring one in circulation. It was issued on December 9, 1960; its substitute, portraying the first President of Israel Dr. Chaim Weizmann, was placed into circulation on Jan. 13, 1972, about 11 years and two months later. It continued to be used at least another year until it was almost totally withdrawn from circulation.



* The longest time needed to prepare an Israeli banknote was for the IL 100, depicting Theodore Herzl, which was introduced into circulation on February 27, 1969 - nine years!

* The largest series of Israeli banknotes was the Sheqel series. Between the date of issue on February 24, 1980 and November 1984, a period of four years and nine months, nine banknotes were issued. That was the period of soaring inflation in Israel which necessitated the issue of higher and higher denominations until the September 1985 currency reform, when three zeros were dropped from the denominations and the New Sheqel introduced.

* The smallest series of banknotes was the so-called third series of the Bank of Israel which was put into circulation between February 1969 and January 1972. The series included only 4 banknotes: IL 5, IL 10, IL 50 and IL 100.

* The largest coin ever issued in Israel was the 5 Israeli pounds, put into circulation on September 21, 1978. Its diameter was 30mm.

* The smallest coin ever issued in Israel was the aluminum new agora coin, introduced on February 24, 1980. Its diameter was 15mm.

* The lowest vintage figures for circulation coins issued in Israel were:

5 agorot of 1964 - (התשכ"ד) 21,451 pieces.

1/2 New Sheqel of 1988 - (התשמ"ח) 20,000 pieces.

These figures make these coins the rarest ever issued.

Fifty Pound Palestine Currency by Jack H. Fisher

Palestine Currency Board notes provide interesting and intriguing challenges for collectors and research of varied backgrounds. Each denomination and date of these notes have separate and distinct challenges and mysteries. It is not possible as a result of space limitations to cover information about all denominations and dates of issue in one article.

Mysteries involving the 50-pound notes are of such current interest that the emphasis of this article is about the 50-pound denomination. The 50-pound notes have puzzled and mystified me for over 30 years. The more I learn about them, the more there is to learn. I am still seeking facts to provide myself and the numismatic-syngraphic community with answers to many still-unanswered questions.

The questions most frequently asked pertain to the number of 50-pound regular issue notes (not specimen or canceled notes) that are actually known by me to exist. Other frequently asked questions are about verified dates of issue, sale prices, available notes on the market and other questions that are either different or variations of the most generally asked questions. These questions come from both dealers and collectors.

There are 15 regular-issue 50-pound Palestine Currency Board notes known to me as of the date this article is being written in June 1994. These are all regular issue notes that were in circulation as legal tender.

Some ask: "What is portrayed on the 50-pound notes?" The pictorial representation on the face of the 50-pound notes is the Crusader's Tower, Ramleh. The Citadel in Jerusalem is portrayed on the back. The note is 103 x 190mm. with front colors of green, blue and brown. The back colors are green and purple. Verified dates of issue are Sept. 1, 1927, Sept.30, 1929, and Sept.7, 1939.

In over three decades only a small number of 50-pound notes were able to be verified by me to exist. I learned about such notes over a period of many years to the point where I now have knowledge as to only 15 notes. Once in a while I am contacted by individuals who own or know about "another 50-pound note" to add to my survey list, which is greatly appreciated by me. Some of the time I am disappointed that the new note turns out to be a Specimen or canceled note rather than a regular issue note.

The last information I was able to obtain from official sources in London was that there are 82 50-pound regular-issue notes that were not redeemed and are still outstanding. The theory is that there is a theoretical 82 notes for collectors to possibly locate. Then there is the reality that there are only 15 such notes known by me to be in collections or in the possession of dealers.

Sixty-seven 50-pound Palestine Currency Board notes are missing. Where are they? Who has them? I want the answers. The numismatic-syngraphic community wants to know.



Official sources advised me that there are always a certain number of notes in all issues of paper money that are destroyed by many different causes and events. Some are fire, floods, war and countless other causes. It has to be assumed that some of these missing 67 seven notes were destroyed. I still have to assume that some did survive. One of the reasons for my belief for the survival of 50-pound notes is my research about the 100-pound notes for the same period of time. I verified that only six 100-pound notes (regular issue) had not been redeemed. None were reported to have survived in

museums or private collections. Then one after the other were reported until it was verified that four do exist, with only two unredeemed notes not presently known.

There is no guarantee that the survival rate of 100-pound notes of four out of six should apply to the 50-pound notes, but 15 out of 82 just seems to imply in common sense that there must be 50-pound regular issue notes some place in the world. Where are these missing notes?

It is my additional assumption that the unreported 50 pound notes are probably of the 1929 and 1939 issues. These being the last two dates of issue. The amount of 50-pound Palestine Currency Board notes in circulation in designated Palestine pounds is set forth for each year from 1927 until 1952 from official British records as follows:

Year	Palestine Pounds	
March 31, 1928	98,000 Pounds	March 31, 1940 295,800 Pounds
March 31, 1929	98,150 Pounds	March 31, 1941 611,050 Pounds
March 31, 1930	97,200 Pounds	March 31, 1942 575,250 Pounds
March 31, 1931	98,350 Pounds	March 31, 1943 802,400 Pounds
March 31, 1932	76,850 Pounds	March 31, 1945 1,208,500 Pounds
March 31, 1933	70,200 Pounds	March 31, 1946 1,028,850 Pounds
March 31, 1934	68,250 Pounds	March 31, 1949 411,450 Pounds
March 31, 1935	90,150 Pounds	March 31, 1950 322,050 Pounds
March 31, 1936	136,700 Pounds	March 31, 1951 73,500 Pounds
March 31, 1937	76,200 Pounds	March 31, 1952 20,300 Pounds
March 31, 1938	53,400 Pounds	Last Official Information
March 31, 1939	170,200 Pounds	4,100 Pounds (82 notes)

The number of 50-pound notes of all of the issue dates of 1927, 1929 and 1939 peaked at 1,235,500 Palestine pounds on March 27, 1947, being a total of 24,700 50-pound notes. Following the amount in circulation each year provides the collector and researcher some basis for possibly estimating the amount of notes with the different issue dates.

This is in part the basis for my opinion and assumption that more 1929 and 1939 notes must have survived some-place in the world that have not as yet been made known to me or to any of my information sources. The redemption authorities in London did not record dates of issue of the 50-pound notes that were redeemed, canceled and destroyed. This is definite proof there is no official record of the dates of issue of the 82 50-pound notes that were not redeemed. The only exception being the 15 regular issue notes verified by me to date that do exist.

These 15 notes are all regular-issue notes that are not specimen or canceled notes. The highest 50-pound serial number known to me at this time is a regular issue 1939 50-pound note that was canceled after being in circulation in the redemption procedure. It is one of three 1939 known to me to have been "rescued" after cancellation and

before physical destruction. This note is in our personal collection and has serial number A024551. The dates of issue and the serial numbers of these 15 notes are as follows:

Fifty Pound Notes	1929	A010246
1927 A000065	(Jack and Marian	
1927 A000774	Fisher Collection)	
(Jack and Marian	1929	A012350
Fisher Collection)	1929	A015949
1929 A004356	1929	A016036
1929 A005593	1929	A019138
1929 A005611	1929	A014123
1929 A006262	1929	A015252
1929 A008248	1939	A023317

1927 50-pound notes were produced and issued from 1927 until the 1929 50-pound notes were produced and issued. The 1929 notes are dated Sept. 30, 1929, so the 98,150 Palestine pounds of 50-pound notes reported in circulation on March 31, 1929, had to be only 1927 notes. This computes to 1,963 1927 notes in circulation as of that date.

There is the additional conclusion that additional 1927 notes must have been produced and issued after March 31, 1929, since the 1929 notes were produced and dated as of Sept. 30, 1929. There is no way to verify this additional number of 1927 notes in that official sources stated that such records were not maintained.

The report of 170,200 Palestine pounds of 50-pound notes in circulation as of March 31, 1939, converts to 3,404 50-pound notes dated 1927 and 1929, in that 1939 notes are dated Sept. 7, 1939. There is no way to verify the number of 1929 notes produced and issued in 1939 after March 31 until the 1939 issue date of Sept. 7 in that no records were maintained.

Another element in the 50-pound note mystery is that official sources stated that no records are available to verify the exact number of 1927, 1929 and 1939 notes that were produced and issued. Information was also not available as to the possible reissue of notes after they were turned in for redemption. So many questions require answers before all aspects of the 50-pound mystery can finally be solved.

The number of 50-pound notes in circulation after the 1939 issue date of Sept. 7 showed a dramatic increase year after year until the peak year of 1947. It would seem logical that 1939 notes would be the majority in circulation as redemptions increased until the official record that only 82 50-pound notes have not been redeemed for 50-pound notes.

The sales of notes known to me extend over a period of many years. The notes sold were of varied dates and grades. Most sales of such notes are on a private basis from dealer to collector or from

collector to collector, so no public records of such sales are available for inspection. Reports submitted to me are without verification for this reason. Prices paid for 50-pound notes ranged from \$5,000 to \$10,000 in accordance with statements from either buyer or seller as well as second and third-hand hearsay reports. 1929 and 1939 50-pound notes were offered to me within these price ranges in recent years.

I was offered a 1927 50-pound note with serial number A000065 in 1988 for \$16,000 from a Middle Eastern dealer. Photocopy of the note was sent to me, and since my own 1927 50 pounds was a much higher grade that I did not need this note. I did not learn later about this note being sold or retained. I would welcome information as to the sale of any 50-pound note at a well advertised auction, and I hope that such a regular-issue note is offered at auction in the near future.

The mysteries relating to the 50 pound notes will continue to exist unless all individuals with information about the survival of more 50-pound notes than are listed above will make such information known. I would also welcome information about the known destruction of any such 50-pound notes by fire or other causes to be able to delete them from the 82 possible outstanding notes. My research is ongoing.

Information is always being sought by me about all existing 50-pound notes. It is requested that such information and photocopies be sent to Jack H. Fisher 3123 Bronson Blvd. Kalamazoo, MI 49008. Information received will be shared with the numismatic-syngraphic community.

Dues Reminder Notice

The annual dues renewal notices for 1995 membership in A.I.N.A. were sent out the 30th of November. We sincerely thank those members who have not procrastinated and mailed in their dues promptly.

This notice is meant as a gentle reminder to those A.I.N.A. members that have not yet responded. Won't you please take a few minutes time, write out a check and mail it in? It will save us the work of writing and the expenses of mailing out follow up letters.

Jozef Israels by Abraham Goldberg

Jozef Israels the famous Dutch-Jewish painter, was born in Holland in 1824. He was the acknowledged leader of the Hague School of Painters and recognized master of Dutch impressionism. Many of his paintings dealt with Jewish themes, notably "A Son of the Ancient People," "Jewish Wedding Feast," and "The Scribe."

Jozef Israels, though classed as belonging to the Impressionists at whose head stood Camille Pissarro, blazed his own path and exerted a significant influence on Dutch art. Israels, the son of a broker, left his father's profession for painting. He did not achieve his eminence easily; gropingly he followed the accepted genre of the country which at that period dominated the palettes and brushes of his contemporaries. Later, after much self-struggle, he became one of the lyricists of Impressionism. Israels did not escape the influence of the great master Rembrandt who made the Amsterdam ghetto, its quaint scenes and hidden glories, a favorite subject for his brush.

Born in Amsterdam, Jozef Israels was saturated from birth with the sadness of his environment, that tragic touch which pervaded even the joys of the ghetto. It was this lament that made Israels a great painter; that touch of tragedy Israels raised to the exaltation of Fate – not the Fate of the Greeks at whose feet men with broken spirits cowed, but a Fate that men wrestled with as Jacob did with the Angel.

In Israels the lyricism of Pissarro found its reincarnation, and he surpassed even his master in creating an atmosphere that only great poets are capable of. They achieve their ends not merely by diction or a chosen word but by the combination of rhythmical cadences. So it was with Israels, not merely a matter of paint and exact lines but the play of shade against shade. Shade was not to Israels what it was to most Impressionists, merely darkness, but rather a tinted form of light. We have for this the word of the great Jewish-German painter and critic, Max Lieberman, who said: "Only a lyrical poet can be just to Israels, because his painting is paint turned into a poem; a single folk song, childish; and in the Biblical sense carried by one tune, expressing a mellow spirit, conceiving again a still more mellowed spirit." Light glows through Israels' famous painting, *The Jewish Wedding*, which, though enveloped by shades, is nevertheless not enshrouded. The very shades quiver with light. By looking closely, one observes the contours of serene men and women participating in the wedding ceremony. This scene lingers in the memory. Though subdued in tone there flickers a celestial light which is reflected not only in the bridegroom and the bride, but more so in the face of the Rabbi performing the ceremony who is envisaging the rise of a new world. This light is also reflected in the Rembrandtesque faces of the participants who understand the full significance of the ceremony.

The term "Rembrandtesque faces" does not mean that Israels painted in the genre of the unforgettable Rembrandt. There are probably more distinctions between the two Dutch masters than there are actual resemblances. Rembrandt is more decorative and richer in color; he approaches his object with more tints on his palette. Decorative, to use the apt phrase of Lieberman, does not mean decoration. Rembrandt nevertheless stressed the decorative side in his painting; but Israels avoids embellishing details. Though they differed in their methods, in the general effect of their art, Israels is more than reminiscent of Rembrandt. Methods change but quality remains. Both men brought similar attitudes to their work. Rembrandt and Israels both pursue the general tone and ignore the minutiae, subordinating the details in the general sweep of their pictures. Both emphasize light rather than color, though Israels may have lacked facility in creating picturesque effects. Play and riot of color may give an impression of opulence and wealth of emotion, but play and riot are not guarantees of good painting.

Wealth may create chaos; opulence is not synonymous with richness. One is reminded of the banker who entered his vault, closed it accidentally, and starved to death. In the Greek legends there is the story of Tantalus, who, though immersed in water, remained thirsty forever, for not a drop touched his mouth. Wealth presupposes money in circulation. Wealth of feeling, however, in order to be effective, must be controlled and disciplined so that it does not run amuck and result in disharmonious dashes. Color in painting is not a superfluous element but a component of expression. Tints to Israels were an integral part of his pictures and he knew how to control his colors.

Israels shared still another quality characteristic of Rembrandt - his religiosity. Art to him was not a diversion but a religious service to the spirit. He did not believe in the shibboleth of art-for-art's-sake, which subordinated the artist to his art. There can be no great art if the artist is not conscious of his spiritual faculties. If the artist allows himself to be carried away by his emotions instead of directing them into channels excavated from his experiences and mastering them to the end in mind, he is merely playing with the surface and does not penetrate the heart of his art. Israels still had great ideas; not abstract philosophic ideas but ideas saturated with his lifeblood, ideas which stirred him emotionally and overwhelmed him, ideas which he envisaged in the perspective of spiritual sensations.

Israels as an Impressionist dealt with feeling distilled in his inner consciousness, with effects rather than with causes, for in his pictures he employed not merely objective but also psychological devices. He did not rush to his easel and rely on the play of brush and color to create life. He was not a copyist. He had always been stirred by ideas culled from life, ideas that were endowed by permanent meanings and eternal values.

Israels more than once acknowledged the influence of Millet and he drew satisfaction from this debt. Millet influenced Israels not in the texture but rather in the direction of his art. Israels believed that a poor man carrying a bundle could possess beauty, and in later years he dedicated his art to a portrayal of the poor, the meek, the hewers of wood and the carriers of water. His pictures of Dutch fishermen are in line with Millet's portraits of toilers, for Millet affected Israels' method of painting and its essence and approach, transferring Israels from a painter of saccharine pictures to one whose work portrayed the soul rather than the shell of life. Millet is somber and freighted with protest, which, though controlled, may burst its bonds and like Samson of old destroy the foundations of the order that shackled him, even at the cost of perishing himself ! Israels, however, with an incorrigible optimism, lightens his paintings by underscoring them with a tender humanity. He transposes the proverb, "Where there is light, there is shade," to "Where there is shade, there is light." Thus even when dusk dominates his paintings, he admits light, relieving the darkness rather than emphasizing it. In his yearning for light Israels is akin to the Dutch masters who suffused their pictures with a quiet shining luminosity; irrespective of their mood, they always painted a radiance of face that never pales. Perhaps this characteristic stems from the haze of the Dutch soil and climate.

Israels was Dutch in that he captured in his art those tones of twilight glimmering in the Netherlands atmosphere. And the pictures of Israels are endowed with a sensation of endlessness which is akin to eternity.



On January 27th, 1904, for his 80th birthday, an impressive ceremony in his honor took place in the Pulchri Studios of the Hague, where a medal was presented to him on behalf of artists and admirers the world over. The medal, struck in both silver and bronze was made by the artist J. C. Wienecke.

The Jewish Connection with Holland

By BERNARD POSTAL and SAMUEL H. ABRAMSON

Reprinted from "from Landmarks of a People" 1962

The Jewish connection with the Netherlands can be traced to the thirteenth century, when Jews from Germany settled in the northern provinces and exiles from England and France found a haven in the south. Periodic expulsions and persecutions in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries prevented the establishment of a permanent Jewish community for two hundred years. But even before the Inquisition reached into the Low Countries in the first half of the sixteenth century, there were secret Jews in many cities of the Netherlands.

The Inquisition in Spain and Portugal substantially increased the Jewish population in Holland when Marranos began trickling into the country. Expelled later, in 1550, by Emperor Charles V, they were welcomed back in 1579 by the newly created Union of Utrecht, which drove out the Spaniards and for the first time anywhere in Europe established a climate of religious tolerance.

A tiny group of practicing Jews founded a permanent settlement in Emden about 1580. Later arrivals from Portugal also came to Emden and then moved on to Amsterdam, where in 1597 they opened Holland's earliest synagogue in the home of Samuel Pallache, the Sultan of Morocco's consul. By 1610 there were also Jewish residents in The Hague, Rotterdam, Haarlenn, Amersfoort and Alkmaar, and in a number of towns in the provinces of Friesland and Groningen.

The growing Jewish population impelled the parliament in 1619 to ask Hugo Grotius, the eminent legal scholar, to draft rules governing the treatment of the Jews. This document, extraordinarily liberal for its time, lifted all degrading medieval restrictions on the Jews and accorded each city the right to accept or exclude Jews from its borders. Only Utrecht and Maastricht barred them. In 1657 the Jews were declared subjects of the State.

Enjoying freedom of movement as well as of religious practice, and encouraged to engage in trade and commerce, the Jews from Spain and Portugal employed their valuable economic connections and their substantial wealth in the interest of their new homeland. They introduced the diamond, tobacco, and silk industries, opened sugar refineries, and played a key role in developing Holland's overseas commerce. They helped oust the Portuguese from the East and West Indies, had a hand in organizing the Dutch East and Dutch West India companies, and did much to promote trade with the New World, Genoa, Leghorn, and the Near East.

Welcomed in the Dutch colonies in Brazil and the West Indies, the Jews had a big hand in developing Surinam and Curacao and the

Dutch settlements in Brazil. From among these Dutch Jews came the first Jewish settlers in the New World and the founders of the reestablished Jewish community in England.

Success in commerce and industry was paralleled by impressive accomplishments in literature, philosophy, and the arts. Noted rabbis, scholars, poets, and scientists helped usher in a golden age in the seventeenth century, when Amsterdam became known as the New Jerusalem. After Manasseh ben Israel set up Holland's first Hebrew printing press in 1636, Amsterdam became a leading center of Hebrew book publishing. In 1678 the *Gazeta de Amsterdam*, the world's very first Jewish-owned periodical, appeared.

The community was greatly enlarged after 1630 with the arrival of large numbers of Ashkenazic Jews from Germany, Poland, and Lithuania. Within one generation they outnumbered the Portuguese Sephardim. It was Manasseh ben Israel, renowned scholar and chief rabbi of the Sephardic community, who in 1655 set the stage for the readmission of the Jews to England.

For a time the Sephardic and Ashkenazic communities in Amsterdam developed separately. The former created three congregations, starting in 1608, which were merged in 1639 as a prelude to the erection in 1675 of the historic Portuguese Synagogue. Now a national monument, it is the last remnant of the Portuguese community. The Ashkenazim founded their first congregation in 1635. When the Thirty Years' War and the Chmielnicki pogroms in Poland gave impetus to further immigration from Germany and Eastern Europe, the first large Ashkenazic house of worship, the Great Synagogue – the so-called "Hoog Duitsch" – was built in 1671.

In the environs of these synagogues Rembrandt lived and worked for seventeen years, steeping himself in Jewish law and lore, befriending Jewish beggars and refugees, and finding many of his models among the Jewish savants, from whom he gained an insight into the cabala.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, Amsterdam had the largest Jewish community in Western Europe. It expanded even more after 1795, when, under the rule of Napoleon, the Jews were granted complete civil equality and Holland became the first country in Europe to elect Jews to its parliament. Further growth ensued when the Netherlands, once more independent, made Jews equal citizens and accorded Judaism parity with all other faiths in 1815. While the community grew and prospered, however, it declined as a center of Jewish learning, owing to the rise of other major Jewish communities in Eastern and Central Europe.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Netherlands Jewish statesmen, scientists, artists, dramatists, professors, and labor leaders gained international recognition, while the Dutch economy was materially enlarged by the pioneering enterprises of Jewish industrialists. At the same time there was a large Jewish proletariat

of dock workers, peddlers, diamond cutters and clothing workers. Until 1940, the General Diamond Workers' Trade Union was predominantly Jewish in membership.

On May 10, 1940, when the Nazis invaded the Low Countries, there were 140,000 Dutch Jews in Holland, half of them in Amsterdam, plus several thousand refugees from Germany. At first the fierce resistance of the Dutch balked the Nazis in their attempt to exterminate the Jews. The daring revolt and general strike of February 1941 in Amsterdam was a valiant but futile protest against the deportations of Jews. Christians risked their lives daily to hide Jews, and when the Nazis forced the Jews to wear a yellow Star of David many gentiles followed suit. Ultimately, 110,000 Jews were deported to the death camps from the Westerbork concentration camp. Only 6,000 Dutch Jews survived.

Today there are 20,000 Jews in Holland. Because of their deep roots in the country's economic, social, cultural, and political life, they have made an astonishing recovery.

The bond of friendship between Holland and Israel was forged during the birth of the Jewish state. Holland supported the United Nations partition resolution of 1947 calling for a Jewish state and was quick to establish diplomatic relations with Israel after its establishment. The two States have continued to maintain robust economic and cultural ties. Many of Israel's commemorative coins have been minted at the Dutch Mint.

The Israel-Holland Friendship Medal symbolizes the special ties between the two nations. Both countries have a unique geography and use innovative solutions to utilize land in the best possible way. Israel has worked wonders in the desert and Holland in reclaiming land from the sea. Thus "Man and Nature" was the theme chosen for this special medal for both countries.



Israel Side: Hands sowing and making the desert bloom. Inscription: "Man & Nature" in Hebrew, Dutch and English. Emblem of the State.
 Dutch Side: Dikes, waves, windmills, lighthouse and tulips, sea-level gauge. Inscription: "Holland-Israel Friendship" In Hebrew, Dutch and English, Royal emblem of the Netherlands

THE SOCIETY FOR THE DIFFUSION OF ENLIGHTENMENT

by S.M. Dubnow

For hundreds of years to the mid 19th century, Russian Jews were a status of non-persona. Mostly illiterate, banned from trade guilds, restricted by the Pale where they could reside, hated by the Russian populace, there seemed no possibilities of improving their situation despite the European cultural movement then beginning to seep into crevices of the Russian Empire. Though intensely engaged in this cultural movement, Russian Jewry did not yet command sufficient resources for carrying on a well-ordered and well systematized activity. The only modern Jewish organization of that period was "The Society for the Diffusion of Enlightenment amongst the Jews," which had been founded in 1863 by a small coterie of Jewish financiers and intellectuals in St. Petersburg. It would seem that the Jewish colony of this Russian metropolis, consisting of big merchants and university graduates, who, by virtue of the laws of 1859 and 1861, enjoyed the right of residence outside the Pale, did not yet contain a sufficient number of competent public workers.

For during the first decade of the Society, its Executive Committee included, apart from its Jewish founders - Baron Gunzburg, Leon Rosenthal, Rabbi Neuman -, two apostates, Professor Daniel Chwolson and the court physician, I. Berthenson.

The purpose of the Society was explained by one of the founders, Leon Rosenthal, in the following unsophisticated manner:

"We constantly hear men in high positions, with whom we come in contact, complain about the separatism and fanaticism of the Jews and about their aloofness from everything Russian, and we have received assurances on all hands that, with the removal of these peculiarities, the condition of our brethren in Russia will be improved, and we shall all become full-fledged citizens of this country. Actuated by this motive, we have organized a league of educated men for the purpose of eradicating our above mentioned shortcomings by disseminating among the Jews the knowledge of the Russian language and other useful subjects."

What the Society evidently aimed at was to place itself at the head of the Russian-Jewish intelligentsia, which had undertaken to act as negotiators between the Government and the Jews in the cause of Russification. In reality, the mission of the Society was carried out within exceedingly narrow limits. "Education for the sake of Emancipation" became the key watchword of the Society. It promoted higher education by granting monetary assistance to Jewish students, but it did nothing either for the upbuilding of a normal Jewish school or for the improvement of the heders and yeshivahs.

The dissemination of the knowledge of "useful subjects" reduced itself to granting of a few subsidies to Jewish writers for translating a few books on history and natural science into Yiddish. Even more circumscribed and utilitarian was the point of view adopted by the Odessa branch of the Society. This branch, founded in 1867, adopted as its slogan "the enlightenment of the Jews through the Russian language and in the Russian spirit." The Russification of the Jews was to be promoted by translating the Bible and the prayer-books into the Russian language, which must become the national tongue of the Jews." However, this headlong rush for assimilation was soon halted by the sinister spectacle of the Odessa pogrom of 1871. The moving spirits of the local branch could not help and to use the language of its president, "losing heart and becoming rather doubtful as to whether the goal pursued by them is in reality a good one, seeing that all the endeavors of our brethren to draw nearer to the Russians are of no avail, as long as the Russian masses remain in their present unenlightened condition and harbor hostile sentiments towards the Jews." The pogrom put a temporary stop to the activity of the Odessa branch.

As for the central Committee in St. Petersburg, its experience was not less disappointing. For, despite all the endeavors of the Society to adapt itself to the official point of view, it was regarded with suspicion by the powers that be, having been included by the informer Brafman among the constituent organizations of the dreadful and mysterious "Jewish Kahal.". The Russian assimilators, now branded as separatists, found themselves in a tragic conflict. Moreover, the work of the Society in promoting general culture among the Jews was gradually losing its reason for existence, since, without any effort on its part, the Jews began to flock to the gymnasia and universities. The former practical stimulus to general culture - the acquisition of a diploma for the sake of equal rights - was intensified by the promulgation of the military statute of 1874 which conferred a number of privileges in the discharge of military duty on those possessing a higher education. These privileges induced many parents, particularly among the merchant class which was then being drafted into the army for the first time, to send their children to the middle and higher educational institutions. As a result, the role of the Society in the dissemination of enlightenment reduced itself to a mere dispensation of charity, and the great crisis of the eighties found this organization standing irresolute at the cross-roads.

However, as conditions for Jewish life continued to decline because of the numerous government sanctioned pogroms, in which thousands of Jewish lives were snuffed out, the organization's decline reversed itself and took on new direction. It began to sponsor Jewish schools, heders and yeshivahs. As one of the few societies which had the Russian government approval, its purpose was expanded to embrace and provide assistance in all other Jewish related disabilities.

In 1913, for the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the society's founding, the decision was made to commemorate this monumental occurrence with the striking of a medal. The great Russian Jewish engraver Ilya Guenzburg, born Elias Ginsburg in Vilna was given the commission. Guenzburg was a graduate of the St. Petersburg Academy of Fine Arts, winner of a gold medal in sculpture at the 1900 Paris Exposition, and a renowned society sculptor and medalist whose numerous medals and plaques read like a bibliography of late 19th century Russian culture. Among his most prominent works are those of Count I.I. Tolstoy, Countess Ludmilla Tolstoy and the composer Rimsky-Korsakov. This medal appears to be the only one to have been associated with Guenzburg that has Jewish significance.

The obverse of the medal shows a young boy and girl seated at a table. The boy is studying a book while the young girl, with pen in hand, is writing. From their facial expressions one can see the full attention both subjects are giving to their work. A hand holds a flaming torch over them, signifying the light of learning. Several Hebrew letters surround the flame. The inscription, which is written in Russian letters, circles the rim.

The reverse is written in Hebrew characters and shows a large Star of David positioned over a broad center band which divides the medal into two sections. The dates 1863 - 1913, which signify the 50th anniversary, are positioned at either ends of this band. A leafy floral sprig is gracefully and stylishly interwoven through the triangular openings of the Jewish star.



Daniel Friedenberg, in his great book "Jewish Minters and Medalists," from which the photographs of the medal and information on its engraver were taken, calls the medal "50th Anniversary of the Society for the Spreading of Education among the Jews of Russia." The societies are indeed the same. The name differences coming from the Russian/Jewish to English translations.

CLUB



BULLETIN

DONNA J. SIMS N.L.G.

Editor

**P.O. BOX 442 HERMOSA BEACH, CA.
90254-0442**



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INS OF CLEVELAND - The September meeting was cancelled due to conflict with the High Holidays, so the October meeting became the first meeting of the new club year. Sanford Brown gave a report of his recent trip to Spain and to Portugal, and Fred Ross presented an amusing and surprising overview of a numismatic related and inexpensive segment of the hobby - "schnorring with a typewriter."

INS OF LONG ISLAND - Exhibit topics for the September meeting (date changed due to the holidays) were: Rosh Hashana, candelabra, my most beautiful Israel coin, and new acquisitions. For October: my other collection, paper tokens of Israel and Crusader coinage. For November: Bar Kochba coins, Hanukkah coins, and B'Nai B'rith and Z.O.A. items. Planning stages have begun for the annual holiday festivities in December.

ISRAEL COIN CLUB OF LOS ANGELES - It was announced in the October issue of "The Scroll" that several ICCLA members were exhibit award winners at the recent Golden State Coin Show, and that even a couple members were some of the lucky winners at the gold drawing. Due to unforeseen circumstances the October meeting was cancelled at the last minute, but plans for the December holiday meeting are underway.

INS OF LOS ANGELES - The AINA slide program entitled "Masada" was shown at the October meeting. This excellent presentation was produced by Stanley Yulish. Another AINA slide program entitled "Paper Money of Israel" was shown at the November meeting. This program, produced by Richard Wengel, was highly received by those in attendance. December 15 is the date selected for the annual Holiday party and fun get together. (Hope I will be able to attend this one).

INS OF MASSACHUSETTS - The annual banquet was held Sunday evening, November 6th, with New England Consul from Israel, Dan Kryom, as special guest. The next meeting will be in December; no meetings will be held in January or February.

INS OF MICHIGAN - The special dinner meeting was held the end of September and was well attended. This annual event was held earlier in the year than usual, in order to miss the bad weather season. A new video by Mel Wacks entitled "Visions: 25 Years of the Jewish American Hall of Fame" was featured at the October meeting. Attached to INSM's October newsletter was an in-depth list of items available from AINA; the list included dates and prices.

INS OF NEW YORK - Exhibit topics for the October meeting were: errors in the pruta series, procurators, 1952 paper 50 pound note, 1967 Eilat commemorative, Kadman Museum medal and/or token, and miscellaneous relating to Simchat Torah. For November: 1 agora, Agrippa I ancients, 1955 paper 500 pruta, 1967 Victory commem, Masada medal and/or token, and miscellaneous relating to Balfour Day and Chanukah.

WESTCHESTER ISRAEL NUMISMATIC SOCIETY - Taking a break from the usual study pattern, the October meeting featured the topic of architecture on coins, ancient and modern, as well as medals and paper. Any example of architecture such as buildings, structures, temples, arches, facades, etc., were displayed and discussed. Since this study format turned out to be so popular, it was also featured at the November meeting, ships on coins, etc., the topic.

Torah-thon - (Taken from INSLI newsletter) Simchat Torah is the traditional day to finish the annual cycle of reading the Torah and to begin it again. NY's Central Synagogue celebrated its sesquicentennial by reading the entire Torah in a single day. Opera star Beverly Sills began the reading, author Norman Mailer concluded it 12 hours later. Forty Jews and Christians, including broadcasters, actors, writers and members of the congregation, participated. When the reading was completed, in a symbolic gesture, Rabbi Stanley Davids began once more.

COMMENTS FROM DJS - Here we are into 1995 - unbelievable! Hope everyone had the best of holidays possible. AINA is well into its final plans for the annual tour to Israel. I know it will be another success. Be well, be happy... 

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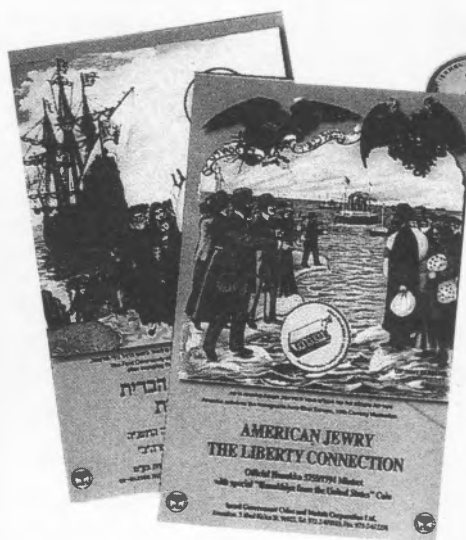
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